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ASSOCIATION OF CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOODS
c/o 213 Hurley Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02141

December 8, 2011

The Honorable City Council
City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Re: Chestnut Hill Realty petition

Ladies and Gentlemen:

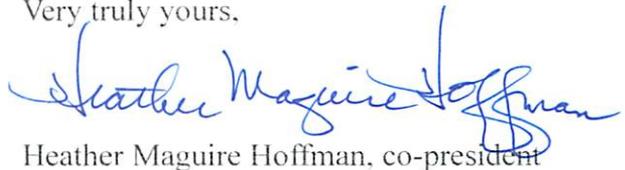
I am writing on behalf of the Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods with respect to the Chestnut Hill Realty petition, also referred to as the basement apartment petition. Although we do not support the idea of bringing back basement apartments to our housing stock, in the event that the Council decides to support the substitute petition offered by Mayor Maher and Councillor Seidel, we would like to suggest a change in the proposed language.

The language in the preamble, proposed new Section 20.610, establishes a citywide problem of insufficient "reasonably priced, affordable studio and one bedroom units" as the reason for permitting greater density in certain existing large apartment buildings than zoning would otherwise allow by converting basement space to new dwelling units. In order to promote this goal and lessen the likelihood that adopting this petition would result generally in a windfall for large landlords without a corresponding gain in housing that would be affordable to "local workers, students and the elderly", we offer the following substitute for proposed Section 20.650:

20.650 *Affordability*. The addition of dwelling units under Section 20.600 shall not result in an increase in the number of market-rate units in the building. A number of units equal to the number of new dwelling units shall become affordable units and comply with all of the affordability, distribution and unit type requirements of Section 11.200. However, only the unit types of the new dwelling units need be considered for this purpose.

Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,


Heather Maguire Hoffman, co-president

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

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